REMARKS

Applicants reply to the Final Office Action dated April 29, 2010, within two months. Claims 1-4 are pending in the application and the Examiner rejects claims 1-4. Applicants add new claims 5-15. Support for the amendments and new claims may be found in the originally-filed specification. No new matter is entered with these amendments or new claims. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of this application.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C § 112

The Examiner rejects claims 1-4 under 35 U.S.C § 112 as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which the Applicant regards as the invention. Applicants respectfully disagree with these rejections, but Applicants present claim amendments in order to clarify the patentable aspects of the claims and to expedite prosecution. Specifically, Applicants' claims now recite, for example, "wherein a hardware processing job may comprise at least part of a hardware processing task". Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the rejection of claims 1-4 under 35 U.S.C § 112.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C § 103

The Examiner rejects claims 1-4 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over MacFarlane et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,125,354 ("MacFarlane"), in view of Peterson et al., U.S. Patent No. 7,020,628 ("Peterson"). Applicants respectfully disagree with these rejections, but Applicants present claim amendments in order to clarify the patentable aspects of the claims and to expedite prosecution.

MacFarlane generally teaches a "method and a system for automatically adjusting charges billed to an organization by a service provider, so as to create an invoice of rebill charges," (abstract). Specifically, MacFarlane discloses "the method and system allocate the charge to the hierarchy....the cost of upgrading the air conditioning would be spread among all subelements of the MidTown Branch," (col. 9, lines 28-35). Also, MacFarlane discloses "The User Code is a code to indicate the element or hierarchal level of the organization to be assigned or allocated," (col. 6, lines 61-64). In contrast to "wherein the billing information includes a unique hardware processing job identifier corresponding to each hardware processing job executed by the provider for the entity," as recited by independent claim 1 (emphasis added) and as similarly recited by independent

claims 6 and 11. Stated another way, the system of MacFarlane assigns a code to <u>the user</u> which indicates a <u>hierarchal level</u> to assign a charge, but the system of MacFarlane does not assign a unique hardware processing <u>job identifier</u> to indicate the <u>job</u> completed by <u>the provider</u>. This is of particular importance in, for instance, assessing specific technology operational costs in the various groups, as disclosed in at least paragraph [0023] of the instant application.

Peterson generally teaches "a system and a method for monitoring remote computer access and associated costs," (abstract). However, Peterson, similar to MacFarlane above, is silent to and thus does not disclose or contemplate "wherein the billing information includes a unique hardware processing <u>job identifier</u> corresponding to each hardware processing job executed by the provider for the entity" as recited by independent claim 1 (emphasis added) and as similarly recited by independent claims 6 and 11. If there is no hardware processing job identifier assigned, then the system is incapable of "allocating, by the computer based system, the billing information by associating each of the unique hardware processing job identifiers to a group in the plurality of groups based on the hardware processing task information," as recited by independent claim 1 (emphasis added) and as similarly recited by independent claims 6 and 11.

Thus, the cited references, alone or in combination do not disclose or contemplate at least "wherein the billing information includes a unique hardware processing job identifier corresponding to each hardware processing job executed by the provider for the entity" and "allocating, by the computer based system, the billing information by associating each of the unique hardware processing job identifiers to a group in the plurality of groups based on the hardware processing task information," as recited by independent claim 1 (emphasis added) and as similarly recited by independent claims 6 and 11.

Moreover, dependent claims 2-4 depend from independent claim 1. Therefore, Applicants assert that dependent claims 2-4 are patentable for at least the same reasons stated above for differentiating independent claim 1, as well as in view of their own respective features. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the rejection of dependent claims 2-4.

New independent claims 6 and 11 have similar elements as independent claim 1. Therefore, Applicants assert that independent claims 6 and 11 are differentiated from the cited references for at least the same reasons as set forth above, as well as in view of their own respective features. As such, Applicants respectfully request favorable consideration as to independent claims 6 and 11.

New dependent claims 5, 7-10 and 12-15 variously depend from independent claims 1, 6 and 11. Therefore, Applicants assert that dependent claims 5, 7-10 and 12-15 are patentable for at least the same reasons stated above for differentiating independent claims 1, 6 and 11, as well as in view of their own respective features. As such, Applicants respectfully request favorable consideration as to dependent claims 5, 7-10 and 12-15.

When a phrase similar to "at least one of A, B, or C" or "at least one of A, B, and C" is used in the claims or specification, Applicants intend the phrase to mean any of the following: (1) at least one of A; (2) at least one of B; (3) at least one of C; (4) at least one of A and at least one of B; (5) at least one of B and at least one of C; (6) at least one of A and at least one of C; or (7) at least one of A, at least one of B, and at least one of C.

Applicants respectfully submit that the pending claims are in condition for allowance. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees which may be required, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. **19-2814**. Applicants invite the Examiner to telephone the undersigned, if the Examiner has any questions regarding this Reply or the present application in general.

Respectfully submitted,
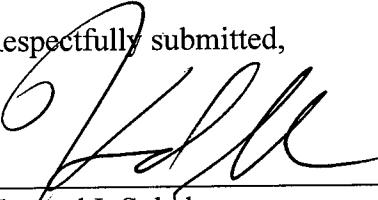
Dated:_____June 28, 2010_____   By:_____

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